



## **Envision Arlington Diversity Task Group**

Date: February 9, 2023

Time: 6:45 pm - 9:00 pm (official meeting start at 7PM)

Location: Hybrid Meeting

In Person: Town Hall Annex, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Remote Participation, via Zoom: <https://town-arlington-ma-us.zoom.us/j/85713651797>

### **Agenda** (times are approximate)

- 1. Land Acknowledgement, Review of Mission Statement and Group Meeting Protocols (5 mins.)**
- 2. Review of January meeting minutes (5 mins.)**
- 3. Updates re: on-going initiatives (10-20 mins.)**
- 4. Discussion on the direction and strategy of DTG, including the role of the DTG chair and the process for selecting a new chair (90 mins.)**

### **Minutes**

Present: Rebecca Gruber (Z), Elizabeth Dray (P - minutes taker), Kellye Eversole (Z) Stephanie Ettinger de Cuba (Z) Jane Flores (Z), Michele Oshima (Z) , Lynette Martyn (Z) , Laurie Key (Z) , Sarah McKinnon (Z) , Katell Gullec (Z) , Louise Popkin (Z)

1. Land Acknowledgement was read, Mission Statement and Group Meeting Protocols were reviewed
2. January minutes were approved.
3. Introductions were made
4. Update on on-going initiatives
  - a. DTG and ACPAC (Arlington Civilian Police Advisory Committee) - Sarah and Elizabeth
    - i. Invitations to a Feb 6 meeting were sent out. It was not received well by all and so we decided to cancel and reached out to Jillian to see if she will guide us.
    - ii. Discussed timeline.
    - iii. Discussed creation of a sub-group to work on identification of criteria for what DTG needs in a candidate. Michele; Elizabeth; Kellye who is happy to support the process but aware of conflict of interest; and

Sarah will start initiating an internal process so that by the time we meet again on March 9th we have criteria, a process and expectations. One concern voiced was concern about the timeline and the advice to "Not let the process get in the way of the result." Can we form a question to send it out to the greater group?

- iv. Some thoughts on possible criteria:
  - 1. To report to DTG / respond to inquiries from DTG
  - 2. Communicate effectively with both APD and community members. Be an honest broker between the two.

- v. **Rebecca will send out an organizing email next week.**

- b. New Mystic Valley NAACP Environmental Committee initiative about not allowing artificial turf in Malden. Turf is being used in a discriminatory manner - it is found in lower socio-economic neighborhood playgrounds while higher income areas have grass. **Rebecca will include information about becoming an MVA NAACP member.**

<https://www.mva-naacp.org/take-action> (GET INVOLVED)

Meetings are usually the last Monday of the month over Zoom at 7:30PM.

- c. Climate Futures Project update - Rebecca and Elizabeth
  - i. The Community Engagement Group met with project advisors this week. On the agenda of the Feb 28 Parks and Recs meeting. Does DTG want to write a letter of support for the project? Yes. **Rebecca will write the draft letter and send it out for review.**
- d. DIGS meeting update - Katell and Rebecca
  - i. Margaret Credle Thomas, APS Diversity Director, was there.
    - 1. She talked about efforts to build bridges between police and AHS.
    - 2. Gibbs/Ottoson Middle School will hire DEI specialists
  - ii. DIGS primary focus is educational for parents, children.
  - iii. DTG and DIGS will continue to work together to share information. We share their info. Will they share ours about ACPAC? **Ask Molly? Maybe discuss at next meeting.**

## 5. Direction and strategy of DTG

- a. Brainstorm:

- i. What about DTG is important to you?
  - 1. Meant to do the work of deepening connections and understanding in a broader sense; down to its granularity so that we can communicate better, foster hope
  - 2. Welcoming and safe place where anyone can come and be heard, have a voice
  - 3. Place where we can learn from people who are not like us, hear diverse opinions (Veterans, different professions, different police experiences)
  - 4. All are welcome, you don't have to be politically connected to come to the meeting and participate in the discussions
  - 5. Learning - speakers teach me about what Arlington has to offer

- and what is going on
- 6. Advocacy role, both with groups that spin out of DTG and letters/emails written in support of issues and warrant articles
- 7. Space to connect, reach out to others and within ourselves
- 8. Authentic connections, reaching deeper
- 9. Open, honest, authentic, respectful conversation about diversity and inclusion issues in town
- 10. Thoughtful, not just political
- 11. Intellectually curious
- ii. What do you think the bare bones of DTG needs to be to still be an effective organization for you?
  - 1. Build up membership
  - 2. Keep up the fluid, non-hierarchical nature where we can have honest, authentic conversations
  - 3. Figure out its role in the current environment/landscape where there are lots of other organizations doing work that DTG could be doing but is not the official Town group tasked to do them
- iii. What would you like DTG to be/do?
  - 1. Would like it to be a place where we build conversation and connections with others in Town to prevent us from becoming insular, to build bridges
  - 2. Hold difficult conversations with others in Town
    - a. Park Ave church has a Connect series about difficult topics
    - b. Sponsor an event/discussion
    - c. Community crossover dialogues - speaker and conversation after
  - 3. Push for more diversity in Town in different positions
  - 4. Running community events will help broaden our outreach and maybe increase our members
  - 5. The landscape for organizing events has changed since the Town's DEI department was created. DEI/AHRC are now running events like this
  - 6. Need to look at whiteness and have that conversation. It isn't happening in town
  - 7. Coalition building
- iv. Direction choices -
  - 1. Do we want to be activists in Town?
  - 2. Do we want to be a space where like minded people can come together to discuss and come up with small steps to share our concerns with each other and the community?
- v. Additional thoughts -
  - 1. "You can't workshop your way out of racism"
  - 2. "We are all here to awaken from the illusion of our separateness"
- vi. Next meeting -

1. What is your role in DTG?
2. What are you prepared to do for DTG to be what you need it to be?